

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEARNE AREA COUNCIL

dac 0302 2014/2

18th NOVEMBER, 2013

27. **Present:** Councillors Noble (Chair), Brook and Worton

28. **Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non pecuniary interest.

29. **Minutes of the previous meeting of the Area Council**

RESOLVED : That the minutes of the previous meeting of Dearne Area Council held on 23rd September, 2013 be approved as a correct record.

30. **Notes of Ward Alliances**

RESOLVED: That the notes of (a) the Dearne North Ward Alliance held on 7th October, 2013 and (b) the Dearne South Ward Alliance held on 9th October, 2013, be received.

31. **Economic Strategy**

Mark Lynam, Head of Regeneration, gave a presentation on the progress being made to refresh the Barnsley Economic Strategy following his appointment in September, 2013. He explained that six economic priorities had been identified relating to:-

- (a) the vibrancy of the Town Centre
- (b) the creation of economic growth and greater prosperity
- (c) the renewal of Goldthorpe and the wider Dearne area
- (d) the creation of more jobs and businesses and increase in skill levels
- (e) the reduction of worklessness and increasing of skill levels
- (f) the strengthening of the visitor economy by developing key cultural assets and events.

The Barnsley Economic Partnership has now been formed to oversee work on the Economic Strategy and £40m has been allocated to the Strategy in order to bring forward projects that focus on the priority theme of providing employment opportunities.

The economic priority relating to Goldthorpe outlined at (c) above will be the subject of discussions with the Area Council. It was noted that economic issues had also been identified as a priority in the Dearne Area Plan.

Reference was made to the need support young people through training packages which would then help them to secure employment, however for many in the two Dearne Wards it was often difficult to get to training courses by public transport. Locally based training provision is preferable and more likely to achieve good participation levels. As well as being easier to access, locally based courses are cheaper to attend. Notwithstanding the importance of public transport for young people without their own private transport, the Integrated Transport Authority was facing real challenges in securing frequent bus services given their limited resources.

It was acknowledged that, unfortunately, some young people had not worked for any length of time since leaving school and had not in some cases developed a 'work ethic'. For young people in this situation very basic training was needed to give them a chance in the employment market.

RESOLVED: That Mark Lynam be thanked for his presentation and the importance of the Economic Strategy for the Dearne area be noted.

32. **Community Shop**

Gary Stott of Forage/Community Shop gave a presentation on the Community Shop initiative being established in Goldthorpe to secure supplies of food to certain local disadvantaged people which would otherwise be classed as waste.

During the presentation he made the following points:-

- (a) food is generally declared as waste in the UK at an earlier stage than in most other countries and a substantial amount is of a reasonable quality for consumption,
- (b) estimates suggest that around 500,000 people go to food banks on a regular basis, a figure that has increased recently, however there is agreement that reliance on food banks is not a satisfactory long term solution for people needing help,
- (c) the Community Shop is based on the ethos of offering established large supermarket chains a price for unused food pallets that is more attractive than alternative disposal options, which could include meeting the cost of landfill,
- (d) the Community Shop on the ground floor of the building will be accessible to people in receipt of certain benefits and will include in the upstairs accommodation a cafe area and facilities aimed at offering other assistance including skills/training related options and mentoring services.

(e) efforts will be made to link with other services and organisations providing support to local communities so the Shop will be part of a co-ordinated approach,

(f) the Shop will be run on a 'social enterprise basis' with any profit from food sales being used to help provide the facilities and support outlined in (d) above, and

(g) the Shop in the building next to Goldthorpe Library is regarded as a pilot and will be assessed with any operational issues being considered as similar shops are established in other parts of the country. It is anticipated that around 20 more shops will open during 2014 in identified neighbourhoods.

The following matters were discussed following the presentation about the Community Shop initiative:-

(i) the 'membership scheme' approach for the Shop is a criteria that the retailers supplying the food have asked for. It will help to ensure that the Shop sells food to people with significant needs, although it is appreciated that some on minimum and low wages will not presently be eligible to purchase goods from the Shop even though they may be struggling with the consequences of their low income. Targetting will be important and will need to be considered carefully. Inevitably there will be people suffering hardship but who do not meet the criteria established for the scheme There may be scope for discussion around the membership criteria for the Shop,

(ii) it is hoped that other organisations, particularly the Credit Union and the Citizen's Advice Bureau, will visit the Shop on a regular basis to offer advice and support,

(iii) the fact that the Shop and the associated facilities are not being provided directly by the Council could be advantage in linking with people who are reluctant to seek support from statutory organisations,

(iv) some employers do credit credit checks before offering jobs and this can be a difficult issue for some people who are trying to get employment,

(v) the Council does have a scheme that enables people in need to be given essential equipment such as cookers and this is generally seen as a better approach when compared to giving people money to purchase the equipment themselves. A similar approach might be a possibility for the Community Shop as the pilot develops.

In conclusion, Members referred to the fact that there were pockets of deprived areas within the Dearne area and people in those areas were more likely to be eligible to visit the Community Shop. Members indicated they would seek to make Community Shop staff aware of the

deprived areas. It was recognised that families with children were an important target for the shop. A number of families were going to be in Council rented housing but others were going to be in private rented accommodation and some additional efforts might be required to make these families aware of the Shop. It was also recognised that, as the Shop is in Goldthorpe, some eligible families in other Dearne villages might find it difficult to regularly travel to the Shop.

RESOLVED: That Gary Stott be thanked for his presentation on the Community Shop initiative and his offer to liaise regularly with local members and relevant officers of the Council be welcomed.

33. **Devolved Ward and Alliance Budgets**

The Area Council considered a paper outlining the current position regarding allocations from the devolved budgets which indicated the following information:-

(a) the Area Council has committed £11,820 of its £40,000 devolved Ward budget allocation,

(b) the Dearne South Ward Alliance has committed £500 of its £10,000 Ward Alliance Fund, the Dearne North Ward Alliance has not yet committed any of its £10,000 Fund, and

(c) the Dearne North Ward Alliance has committed £568.74 of its £7,000 Public Health Fund, the Dearne South Ward Alliance has not yet committed any of its £7,000 Fund

RESOLVED: That the current position regarding expenditure from the devolved Ward budgets outlined above, be noted.

34 **General Performance Monitoring Information**

The Area Council considered a paper outlining the progress being made towards achieving agreed key milestones for the Council itself and for the Ward Alliances. The milestones included specific targets for the approval of the Area Plan, the determination of services for commissioning locally from 2014/15, and the appointment of community representatives on the Ward Alliances. It was explained that the milestones indicated in the paper were being met.

RESOLVED: That that the paper be noted.

35 **Approval of the Area Plan**

The Area Council Manager reported verbally on the consultations that had taken place in local communities regarding the Area Plan and explained that the feedback had suggested that the priorities identified in the draft version were widely supported.

It was suggested that some further contact about the Plan and the associated priorities might be helpful in the Highgate area.

RESOLVED: That the Area Plan be approved and be now used as the basis for determining the commissioning of services for 2014/15.

36 **Future Plan of Action to Address Identified Priorities**

The Area Council briefly discussed the ways in which the priorities in the Area Plan could now be translated into the Area Council's commissioning strategy. It was explained that shortly the common themes from all the Area Plans would be examined to see if there were opportunities to explore economies of scale during the commissioning process. This exercise could bring forward significant savings when compared to each Area Council commissioning the same services separately, however it was important to recognise that the services were commissioned reflected local priorities and differences.

RESOLVED: That the steps being taken to formulate an agreed basis for commissioning local services from 2014/15 be noted.

37 **Next Meeting of the Area Council**

The Area Council Manager explained that it was proposed the next meeting of the Area Council scheduled for 3rd February, 2014 discuss commissioning issues in more detail, including how the Area Council can link with the work of Dearne Approach regarding the provision of local services.

RESOLVED: That the commissioning of local services be the main item for discussion at the Area Council meeting scheduled to be held at 10.00am on 5th February, 2014.

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Chair